

REMARKS

In the Office Action, restriction of this application has been required under 35 U.S.C. §121 as between Group I: claims 1-42 and 56, drawn to an extrusion coating method; and Group II: claims 43-55, drawn to an extrusion coating apparatus.

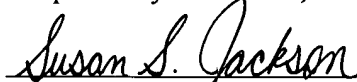
According to the Office Action, the inventions are distinct from each other, and the inventions of Group I and Group II are related as process and apparatus for its practice. All of the claims of the present application relate to extrusion coating. Thus, Applicants contend that a search of such process and apparatus for its practice would not be unduly burdensome upon the Examiner as any search for one of the two identified groups of claims will necessarily entail a search for the subject matter of the other group of claims. Thus, a simultaneous search for all of the standing claims is believed not to constitute an unreasonable search for the Patent Office. It is believed that the objectives of streamlined examination and compact prosecution of patent applications will be promoted if a search is conducted simultaneously for all of the claims. Also, the necessity of filing multiple patent applications for the claims in this case does not serve to promote the public interest due to the extra expense that is involved in filing fees and examination costs, as well as the burden upon the public due to the necessity of searching through a multiplicity of patent files in order to find the complete range of subject matter claimed in differing patents that otherwise could be found in a single issued patent and underlying file history. Likewise, it is submitted to be unfair to these Applicants to incur the expense of prosecuting multiple patent applications where the assertedly differing groups of claims are so closely interrelated to one another. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the requirement for restriction in this case is improper and should be withdrawn, and that examination on the

merits of all of the claims should proceed. Favorable reconsideration of the restriction requirement is respectfully requested.

Although Applicants respectfully traverse the restriction and while Applicants believe that all of the claims in this application should be examined together for the reasons stated above, Applicants recognize that 37 CFR §1.143 requires that a provisional election among the identified groups of claims must be made in this response in order for the response to be deemed complete. Accordingly, without waiving the request for reconsideration for the reasons set forth above, Applicants hereby provisionally elect with traverse to prosecute in this application the subject matter of Group I, claims 1-42 and 56, drawn to an extrusion coating method.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully urged that the present claims are in condition for allowance and reconsideration is requested. An early notice to this effect is earnestly solicited. Should there be any questions regarding this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number shown below.

Respectfully submitted,



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